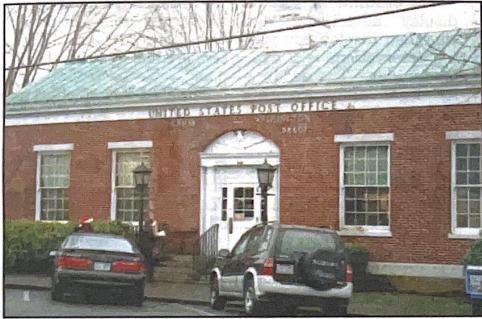


Downtown Camas post office faces possible closure



HEATHER ACHESON/POST-RECORD

Monday is considered the busiest mailing day of the year, according to the USPS, and the downtown Camas branch was no exception. A steady stream of customers strolled in and out all day as they mailed their holiday packages. The facility is currently being considered for consolidation with the other Camas post office site in Southeast Eighth Avenue. If the plan is approved, the downtown branch would be shut down, and the building sold.

□ USPS puts local branch on 'consolidation initiative'

By Heather Acheson
Post-Record staff

On Monday morning, the downtown Camas post office was bustling as local residents waited in a growing line, hoping to get packages sent off to friends and family in time for Christmas. There is a chance, however, that the popular post office branch may not be available next year.

An inconspicuous notice printed on white 8½ by 11-inch paper, posted on a bulletin board inside the historic building, states that the site is being considered for possible consolidation — meaning that it could close and be sold due to its close proximity to another post office about 1.4 miles away.

According to Peter Hass, spokesman for the Portland postal district, if USPS moves forward on the consolidation,

all services previously available at the downtown site would be moved to existing space in the Camas carrier annex located at 2455 S.E. Eighth Ave.

"We are looking for ways to control our costs and reduce costs where possible," Hass said. "When there is more than one post office in a small area, it makes sense to at least look at whether consolidation is an option."

The Eighth Avenue location, tucked behind Gunderson Les Schwab Tire Center, first opened in 1999 and is currently used primarily as a home base where carriers pick up mail for their home delivery routes, and for customers to pick up packages.

According to Ron Anderson, public relations coordinator for the Portland postal district, if the consolidation plan is approved a new retail center would be built to include a service counter, lobby and post office boxes. There are 710 post office boxes at the downtown post office.

Anderson said that between the two Camas locations, there are approximately 30 employees. Most are letter carriers, and about four work out of the downtown office. No layoffs are planned.

"It's just a change to where the main post office would be located," Anderson said. "All of the employees that work there currently would move over to the [Eighth Avenue location]."

Camas resident Barbara Rider said she was surprised to see the notice when she stopped by the downtown post office to pick up her mail last week.

"I was amazed," Rider said. "I saw that last week on the wall and asked if this was a joke, they said 'no, it's really happening.'"

Rider, who lives in a rural area, said she has had the post office box for about 10 years and visits the location two to three times a week. The alternative carrier annex site, she said, is in an

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